

## INTERNATIONAL

# Ivory Coast rebels insist on deal followed to letter

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP) - Rebels holding the northern half of Ivory Coast insisted Saturday that a French-brokered power-sharing deal be followed to the letter, leaving doubts of any breakthrough in the latest efforts to end a 5-month-old civil war.

Rebel and government leaders appeared still sharply divided after talks late Friday in Paris, though there was no comment on the outcome of those talks.

Seydou Diarra, named interim prime minister as part of the Jan. 24 peace accord, stayed in Paris on Saturday for further consultations.

The rebels insist that power-sharing plan gives them the defense and interior ministry, and thereby control of security forces - a claim loyalists reject.

Diarra met in Paris with northern rebel

leader Guillaume Soro, on the sidelines of France's African summit.

"They're not discussing which ministerial posts we get," Antoine Beugre, spokesman for the northern rebels, insisted Saturday in the rebel stronghold of Bouake. "That's impossible because that was decided with the accord. Maybe they're discussing names, but not posts."

The rebels' claim on the defense and security posts has enraged southerners loyal to President Laurent Gbagbo, sparking violent protests in recent weeks that have sent thousands of foreigners fleeing the country.

"These posts cannot go to the rebels," an adviser close to Gbagbo said Saturday on condition of anonymity. "There's nothing to discuss."

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## TEACHERS' STRIKE

Striking teachers sit on an oil pipe at a pumping station in Raxruha, 320 kilometers north of Guatemala City on Wednesday. Some 2,000 teachers seized a pumping station on the French-owned oil pipeline that carries all of Guatemala's oil production from wells in the north to the Atlantic port.

# Uganda's government compensating Ebola victims

By Gabriel Packard

KAMPALA, Uganda (GIN)—The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo has confirmed that an outbreak of the deadly Ebola fever is spreading, and has taken 64 lives so far.

Ebola hemorrhagic fever is one of the most virulent viral diseases known to man, causing death in 50 percent to 90 percent of all clinically ill cases.

The Ebola virus was first identified in a western equatorial province of Sudan and in a nearby region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 1976 after significant epidemics in Yamkubu (Northern DRC) and Nzara (Southern Sudan). Between June and November 1976 the Ebola virus

infected 284 people in Sudan, with 117 deaths. In the DRC, there were 318 cases and 280 deaths in September and October. A large epidemic later occurred in Kikwit in the DRC in 1995 with 315 cases, 244 with fatal outcomes.

Meanwhile, the Ugandan government has begun compensating victims of an Ebola epidemic that struck the country nearly three years ago, the health ministry said.

Ministry officials say that a total of \$454,000 will be given to 22 doctors and health workers who survived after contracting the Ebola while treating patients during the epidemic. The first payments were made last week to four families in the northwest region of Masindi.

Among those paid immediately was Margaret Lukwiya,

widow of the late Dr. Matthew Lukwiya, former medical superintendent of Lacor Hospital, and Dr. Joel Ongebo, whose wife was a nurse.

Health Minister Mike Mukulu has reportedly said he would ask that Lukwiya be declared a national hero for his tremendous sacrifice to control the disease.

The epidemic took place late in 2000, and centered around the small northern farming town of Gulu, claiming the lives of more than 170 of the 428 people who contracted the disease.

Health workers and international agencies were quick to respond to the disease and the country has since been declared Ebola-free.

# Jamaica, Barbados reject proposed political coalition

By Peter Richards

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad and Tobago (IPS)—Efforts by at least two Caribbean leaders to get political union back on the region's agenda were blunted last weekend, even as the regional integration movement (CARICOM) was celebrating 30 years of existence.

Jamaica and Barbados distanced themselves from the initiative first raised by Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Patrick Manning last year and quickly endorsed by his St. Vincent and the Grenadines counterpart, Ralph Gonsalves.

Manning used the opening of the CARICOM Summit here to reiterate his position, saying his administration was prepared to hold negotiations with any country interested in forming the political union.

"We can dilly-dally no longer," Manning told his fellow leaders. "In point of fact, we cannot afford to do so. I am convinced that my Caribbean colleagues will not

cower before a right and proper challenge."

Last year, the Trinidad and Tobago leader broached the idea of confederation of Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, but gave no details on the proposal.

Gonsalves, delivering the inaugural speech in a lecture series sponsored by CARICOM to mark its anniversary celebrations, went even further, arguing that political union provided the region with the opportunity to shake off "the bleak past of yesterday and become optimistic for tomorrow."

Failure to seize the moment would see the Caribbean within 50 years working out "an associate status with the United States or Europe," warned Gonsalves.

"We would be offered some variant of the Platt Amendment of early 20th-century Cuba or some benign, or not so benign, twist to the current Puerto Rican model. If we remained independent, it would be in name only."

The Platt Amendment, adopted shortly after the Spanish-American War, gave the United States control over the military and diplomatic affairs of newly independent Cuba. Puerto Rico became a quasi-colony. It is now a commonwealth but not independent.

"Within 50 years we would be voting in a referendum to determine our status in relation to the United States or Europe," Gonsalves told his audience, asserting that policy makers in Washington were already asking, "Are the countries of the Caribbean viable political and social entities in the new millennium?"

Established in 1973 with four members, CARICOM now groups 15 countries, including Haiti and Suriname, making it the second-longest surviving regional integration movement after the European Union (EU).

CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Carrington lauded the group's success at the summit. "In a wide vari-

ety of fields, such as trade and economics, health and education and foreign relations, we have seen progress, admittedly not nearly as much as we would have hoped for."

"Also we have weathered many storms and traversed many a rocky road, which many a developing country groupings have not," he said.

It appears the region's nations still face miles of rough road, having been slowed by the global economic downturn following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, which particularly hurt the pivotal tourism industry.

They also appear vulnerable to global trade developments, including a World Trade Organization (WTO) complaint launched earlier this month by Brazil and Australia against EU sugar subsidies that, if successful, would also deliver a blow to the Caribbean industry.

Sugar supports about 500,000 people in the region and is among the top three export earners in Jamaica and

Guyana.

While Jamaican Prime Minister P.J. Patterson also saluted CARICOM for "the nurturing of our democracy, the creative talents of our people and their proven resilience, the endurance and maturity of our regional institutions and our collective responses to a variety of political, economic and social issues," he wanted nothing to do with the proposed political union.

Using the analogy of cricket, Patterson sought to further distance himself from the attempts to resuscitate any form of union.

"Jamaica will not be caught out on a non-ball," he said, adding that the country regarded CARICOM as a "community of sovereign states" and it intends to remain sovereign.

"For those countries which want to form a union of a political kind, we not only accept their right so to do, but we will encourage and support them in whatever way possible in making

those intentions a reality," said Patterson. "Jamaica does not contemplate becoming part of a political union."

It was Jamaica's 1962 decision to quit the West Indian Federation that ended that previous experiment in union. At the time, Kingston appealed to an economic argument to quit the federal experiment, saying it feared that it would have to carry the burden of the smaller and more vulnerable states.

This time around, the argument has more of a political ring to it.

The 'Trinidad Express' newspaper said in an editorial Monday that given the strong anti-federal sentiment that remains in Jamaica, "it would be political suicide for Mr. Patterson to adopt any other position."

Barbados Prime Minister Owen Arthur has likened the call for political union to "a song with an exciting melody, but no lyrics."

While the region had developed appropriate struc- (See Union, Page 15)